



PREPARING FOR AN EXCHANGE VISIT

PLANNING FOR YOUR VISIT

Careful planning for the logistics of your exchange visit will help ensure the success of your exchange visit. Travel logistics, including travel arrangements, housing, finances, communication and language, health and safety, and even packing are important – and require early planning to be successful. GPIC is continually developing additional resources with more specific advice on these topics – much of the advice will differ depending on whether you are the US or international partner. This document will outline some of the key considerations that are important for BOTH partners when planning your exchange visit.

Set goals and expectations for the visit

Setting goals and expectations for your exchange visit is a crucial step in making it successful. These should be discussed and decided upon by both partners in advance of the visit. The discussion around this should start well in advance of the visit as it will guide the planning of activities during the visit.

Goals: It's probably best to zero in on 3-4 major partnership goals for the visit (you don't want to be overzealous with goalsetting, but you want to make the trip worthwhile – and goals give you something tangible and measurable to accomplish during the visit. Examples of goals might be: "Drafting the 1- to 3-year plan for our partnership activities," "Better understanding the way palliative care is delivered in rural communities in Kenya," or "Meeting with a local university to explore research collaborations."

Expectations: It is not only possible, but likely that your expectations of a visit may initially differ from those of your partner, so it is important to talk through these. Start by sharing your expectations and asking your partner to share theirs. Understanding each other's expectations – and agreeing on some common ones – will result in an exchange visit that meets (or exceeds) expectations for all.

Scheduling activities

Be sure to start with the few key activities that are crucial to meet your goals for the visit. It is likely you will have way too many things you'd like to fit into way too short of a timeframe... so you will need to prioritize activities and meetings.

As the host, recognize that your partner is going to want to do some tourist activities and will need some down/rest time as well. Don't overschedule them and plan some fun, social time for them to just learn more about your culture!

As the visitor, recognize that spending every minute of your visit with your host can be taxing for them and may not be possible. For example, they may need time at home with their families



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in the evening, so they won't be able to have dinner with you every night. Let your host know when you are OK on your own – in fact you may even want to request some time alone to keep up with emails or work.

Logistical considerations

Planning for various logistics in your travel and activities will vary according to location, so please use any general recommendations with this in mind and seek other input for your specific situation. Global Partners in Care has some resources with more detail to help you plan logistics. We can also connect you with others who have experience traveling or hosting and can share some additional advice!

More detailed advice for US travelers to other countries is available in the document "[Travel Planning from US](#)." Coming soon, we will have additional advice for visitors traveling to visit their partner in the US.

Especially when you are hosting first-time visitors, remember there will be many things that are new or different for them as they experience your world. Be patient with your visitors. Ask them if they need help with anything. Don't hesitate to tell them if certain actions or behaviors are not appropriate. The common denominator here is *open communication!*

Never hesitate to ASK QUESTIONS!

If you are not sure about something as you prepare for an exchange visit – don't hesitate to ask for help. Ask your partner. Ask Global Partners in Care. Seek advice from other people who have hosted international visitors or traveled to the location you are going. Ask.